

New Kent Road 5th of 4th Bro. 1841.

Esteemed Friends

Henry G. & Maria Weston Chapman

In reply to your letter dated Cape Haytien 22nd Feb^y 1841 in which you ask to be informed "as to the state of the cause of freedom universally in England; particularly whether it has ever been made a test of fitness to co-operate with the friends of the cause there that the persons proposing to do so should be under the protection & government of some large religious sect" my answer is first - that in England there exists universal liberty & a degree of freedom of which I believe it is very difficult for persons in other countries to form a just conception - 2nd that it is not required as a test of fitness to co-operate in the cause (of seeking the freedom of the slave or any benevolent object) that those who wish to do so should be under the protection & government of some large religious sect or members of any particular religious body. To obtain any righteous object, it is common to seek the assistance of all, whatever their religious sentiments may be or whatever private opinions they may entertain; while however this is the case, great care is usually taken that those who may be selected as a committee to conduct any benevolent undertaking should be persons of impeccable character who are likely to work well together & that the cause should be hurt. It sometimes happens that in a committee a few of the members may be so illiberal as to object to a man because he may be a Roman Catholic or a Unitarian (by which latter term is understood one who denies the divinity of Christ) when this occurs it causes unpleasantness & the committee commonly endeavour to steer that course which they think most likely to accomplish the object they have in view, sometimes it is by the withdrawal of the objectors sometimes it is of the party objected to. This however does not prevent such persons from assisting by pecuniary means or of their being members of the association, it is merely local, - for instance - a committee might be formed in London & not act with a particular Roman Catholic or a Unitarian or Methodist while at Liverpool or Birmingham a man of either of those religious professions might be so generally esteemed & able, that his assistance would be eagerly sought. By this you will understand there is no rule of exclusion for any & should it happen that different auxiliary associations were to depute such an one to meet a general meeting of the whole body in conference, he would be there admitted & take his place & whatever he might advise would be attended to according as it should be judged wise & good. In general very great care is taken in such meetings to prevent any one from introducing any particular religious opinion & speakers who thus go out of their way are generally called to order.

If your question "as to the state of freedom generally in England" means the state of the public feeling in favour of the slave I should say there is only one universal feeling in his favour & a detestation of slavery wherever it exists together with a general willingness that the produce of free labour come whence it may should be admitted on more favorable terms than the produce of slavery - there has long existed on the part of our Cotton Manufacturers a wish that this country might obtain a supply of cotton from India raised by free labour & that they may not be dependant on America. Great efforts have been quietly made with the East India Company to induce them to encourage the growth of a superior quality in India. The directors have responded to the call & several persons experienced in the growth of cotton in America have been sent out with a good selection of seed & the requisite machinery. Of late the quality has been improved in India & it comes in better condition. As soon as those sent out can introduce better seed great hope is entertained not only that the quality will be greatly improved, but that it will be produced more abundantly. In like manner the importation of sugar from India is about five times greater than it was four years ago with a prospect that there will be made by free labour in India alone in a short time a quantity sufficient for the consumption of Europe at so low a cost that slave produce will not be able to compete with it. Here I would observe

that while professor Adams has shown there exists a species of slavery in India more akin to the system of villianage which formerly prevailed over Europe & exists to some extent still. yet this state of things in India is not in any degree to be compared to that forced labour which prevailed in our West India Colonies & in America. nevertheless so objectionable is slavery in any form that I doubt not the British public as soon as they are fully convinced of its existence in India will be clamorous that full liberty shall be extended to the people there. I view every step the government there have taken in the last few years, as tending to improve the civil condition of the people & that ere long villianage or slavery will cease in India.

In this country we may be considered as having two bodies seeking the welfare of the Negro but following different roads both however doing great good. I should be glad if I could report that both had always acted harmoniously & without interfering with the other: I can however say with pleasure that although the association for the civilization of Africa was assailed through the medium of the paper & by some of the members of the British & Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, yet the association were not provoked to any angry reply - conscious of the justice of its course it could well bear with some invidious aspersions even altho' they were made by men whom they well knew to be real friends to the Slave - they were quite unwilling to enter into a controversy, but instead of entering into a quarrel, individuals attended the committee of the British & Foreign Anti-Slavery Society & remonstrated with it. On that occasion an attendance of several members whose names are of great value, but who usually do not attend, was obtained, since which time things have gone on well. Joseph John Gurney wrote a letter of strong remonstrance & sent it I believe to every member of that Committee & afterwards attended with some others & thus this good result was obtained. It is very difficult to raise a controversy in England about the way in which a benevolent Society thinks fit to attain its end. The English public do not interest themselves about the disputes between persons so as to become partizans - they often judge wisely when they say there are faults on both sides & that it is foolish to waste strength in disputing, when they ought to be working.

The public says if such a body are dissatisfied let them do better if they can, but not occupy themselves with finding fault with others while they do nothing. You probably are aware that the association for the civilization of Africa has perfect good will of Government. F. D. Buxton is the founder of this society, almost all the old Abolitionists are members of the committee except a few of our friends (Quakers) belonging to the British & Foreign Anti-Slavery committee, who perhaps from not fully understanding the course to be followed, might fear a compromise of their principles. Our base is wide enough - we have on our Committee Lords & Members of Parliament - that strenuous stickler for all the rights of the Church of England Sir Robert Inglis, by many dissenters called a bigot, but he called what he may, I think him a very kind & benevolent & good tempered man, acting cordially with Methodists Quakers (of whom we number three on the committee) together with many other persons without once making any difficulty about their religious opinions. I cannot enter fully into the plans of this association, suffice it to say its object is to civilize Africa using only Christian means, such as I, a friend & lover of Peace can cordially unite with.

When sufficient information respecting the interior of Africa is obtained, & the Government shall have succeeded in making such treaties with the Kings & rulers of the interior of Africa, as are judged needful for the protection of Merchants & the cultivation of the soil while prosecuting their peaceful labours - it is expected that an agricultural society will be formed whose object it will be to aid the natives by encouraging them to raise cotton to supersede slave-grown cotton of America (if this we are sanguine) & other produce, & that establishments will be formed at different places where they may always find a market for their goods & purchase English manufactures.

By the expedition now about sailing authority is given to form one or more farming establishments to be managed by people of colour or black men, to affect which a sum of about £4000 was put down by about 8 individuals as a contribution, & they have sent out a variety of cotton seed of the best quality & a cotton gin - It is a well established fact that cotton is indigenous in Africa, that it is both spun & woven dyed there & for native use, & cotton cloth a few years since (as it may still do) formed an article of export to the Brazils. One condition of the treaties to be made with native princes is, that the slave trade shall be abandoned & that all slaves coming within British protection shall be free & not be reclaimed. It is the object of Government to annihilate slavery & not to propose to herself exclusive advantage by her treaties, but American, French & other nations will equally participate in free trade.

It is not needful in this country at what may be termed an unhappy period when many of the members of the American & Foreign Anti-Slavery Society by being misinformed of the state of things in America, had committed themselves by uniting in the view of the American & Foreign Anti-Slavery Society not at the time being aware that they by so acting might obstruct the usefulness of women. I believe such persons to have been deceived. In this country there is no clear perception of the motives that induced the body in America, to endeavour to put women down. There being only one Anti-Slavery Society viz. the British & Foreign, it was another unfortunate circumstance that J. A. Collins did not bring credentials numerously signed addressed to that Society, for had he done so no room would have been left for some of the members of the Anti-Slavery Society to have circulated the surmises & reports to his disadvantage which were sent from America. This is not said by way of excusing their conduct which must be condemned as unjust & wholly unwarrantable in Christian professors. It is at the same time an instance of how easy it is for men to fall into error who wish to do rightly, and we may use it as a lesson reflected back on ourselves that we may not judge those too severely who are not yet enlightened enough to perceive that the practice of slavery is a sin. I mention this particularly because I think the Christian bodies who ~~refuse~~ refuse to partake of the sacrament with other Christian professors, who are not yet convinced of the sin of slavery, ~~are~~ ^{are not} properly ^{likely} likely to win them over to a righteous course - & that their so refusing is an exercise of church dominion likely to injure those who practise it, by making them think themselves more righteous than others. All labour with slave-holders to convince them ^{should be adorned} of their error by the patience & forbearance of Christian love. The situation of J. A. Collins was a distressing

one, inasmuch as being in poor health when he arrived, he met with a very unkind & uncalled for opposition from a violent man, a Captain Stewart. I do not however doubt that Capt Stewart is a most sincere & zealous abolitionist, capable of great pleasantness of manner & patience & persuasive power - but from some weakness capable of a degree of inveteracy, more befitting those bereft of reason than a peaceable christian. I have heard his conduct condemned but this did not prevent your friend Collins being greatly hurt by it, & I do not wonder that this, and the improper conduct of the British & Foreign Anti-Slavery Committee, made him almost despair of obtaining Justice from the latter body. Glad he been in that state of good health in which a man is able to bear all unkindness with perfect calmness, I think he would not only have received justice at their hands, but that that body would have discerned the error they were betrayed into, by the American & Foreign Anti-Slavery body. When a society send on such a mission as that which brought J. A. Collins to this country, do they not commit a great error in sending one person alone, & would they not do much better by sending two in company - Man is the same as he ever was - the disciples indeed with all needful power were sent out in companies of two & John Bunyan illustrates the advantage of two in his account of Faithful & Hopeful. Man wants a companion to consult with & assist in bearing the burden, two can carry more easily than one.

After saying so much on the wish of the English manufacturers to obtain cotton by free labour, I wish distinctly to be understood that I approve of the encouragement that is thus given to obtain cotton from other & fresh sources, because I view it as one of the most powerful means of abolishing slavery. The effect of it I expect will be that cotton will cease to be produced in America by Slave labour.

The growers under the present system will naturally feel alarmed & angry at first, but when necessity shall compel them to set their slaves free, they will discover that cotton can be produced so much more cheaply by free labour that they will not under these altered circumstances fear competition with any part of the world. The slaveholder must abandon the love of power & command over his slave a motive which is perhaps one of the most powerful in making them cling to the system. He need not fear any loss of property from the change from slavery to freedom, for no sooner shall that change take place, than the value of his plantations will be found to increase, & they then alone will be quite equal to the present value of land & slaves. This has been found to be the case in the West Indies, the planters could not believe it at first, but it was quickly discovered by land owners & I well remember that as soon as slavery was ended in Antigua, that a gentleman in London was waited on by a planter & offered £1000 a year as a rent for his estate in that island which for many years yielded no return, ^{whatever} he accepted the offer, but in about one hour afterwards another person called on him & offered £1500 a year for the same estate.

In pursuing your exertions in America for the abolition of Slavery, I am not aware whether or not you had endeavoured to demonstrate to the Planters that they would be gainers by changing the system, - if you have not yet done so, it is not important to show them such would be the result. It will not require any great effort to demonstrate the profit which will arise to them even setting out by merging the value of the slaves into the land - the land at present is of small value because an estate of 1000 acres may require 100 slaves at a cost of 500 Dollars each to cultivate it, & it only can pay a profit after the interest of the cost of the land together with 50000 Dollars the outlay for the slaves is reimbursed with interest in a certain number of years - but sink the 50000 Dollars the cost of the slaves, & add the present value of the land to it the 50000 Dollars instead of disappearing with the lives of the slaves, as it now does, becomes the permanent value of the land because tilled by the labour of free men - out of this better state arise those solid advantages to commerce which ever attends that greatly increas-

remand for the necessities & comforts of life that man in a state of freedom requires. This is again proved by the increase in quantity & quality of our exports to the West Indies - the free black will not purchase those inferior & almost worthless goods which he was accustomed to in slavery but the merchant is obliged to supply good & superior articles, & he finds his account in doing so - and doubtless your manufacturers & traders would benefit in the same way.

This country is not quite free from bigots, nor can we expect it to be for bigotry is like a rank weed whatever pains we may take to eradicate it, ^{from one individual} it will ^{spring up a fresh in others} ~~spring up a fresh in others~~ ~~other fields~~ ~~to supply us with food~~ ~~as an antidote~~, it might be well for us all to study the 13th chapter of 1st Corinthians. 1.6ms I delayed this letter in order to give you the result of the Debate on the proposal of Ministers to reduce the duties on Slave grown ~~foreign~~ sugar - this proposal was strongly supported by the Manufacturing Interest in this country & by Merchants concerned in the Brazilian trade & with the Island of Cuba, after

Thomas Sturge
1841
Henry G. & Maria Weston Chapman
Boston
North America



See some several times
Conducteur himself will
see later but it will not a person of great mindings & discernance.
Several faint lines of text written vertically on the right side of the envelope flap.

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seen a great object of
the anti-slavery
& American people
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of America
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of America

a debate of several nights it was not carried - but although the measure was lost, the fact that many who were strenuous in their exertions to procure do away slavery, were by any cause, or circumstances induced to range themselves with those who wished the duty to be reduced on slave-grown sugar, is to be truly lamented. But so it is, and such is the nature of man, that as soon as an advantage held up to his sight than he wishes for it and begins to consider whether there is anything wrong in reaching out his hand to take it - and to reconcile the wrong act to himself he ~~finds~~ persuades himself that others in distress will be relieved & he deludes himself into a belief it cannot be wrong, especially as he is quite sure his motive is good. ~~See~~ With sincere desire that your cause may go on the blessed. your friend respectfully, Thomas Sturge